operators are permitted to operate scheduled and non-scheduled air transport services. Further, Government has approved construction of new international airports at Shamshabad near Hyderabad, Devanhalli near Bangalore and Mopa in Goa with majority (74%) private sector participation. It has also been decided to restructure the airports of Delhi and Mumbai through joint venture route with majority private sector participation.

(c) to (e) The airport charges payable to Airports Authority of India by private airlines are the same as paid by national carriers *viz.* Indian Airlines and Air India.

Late announcement of open sky policy

2183. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have announced an open sky policy for a three month period starting from December this year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is a fact that several European airlines have complained that they would not be able to offer additional service to passengers from and to India as the Government announcement had come late; and

(d) if so, Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI RAJIV PRATAP RUDI): (a) and (b) A limited open sky policy has been declared for the period December, 2003 to February, 2004, under which foreign airlines can mount extra-bilateral flights subject to existing terms to the commercial agreement with designated Indian carriers.

(c) and (d) While British Airways and Air France indicated their inability to avail of this facility due to insufficient time, most airlines have responded in a very positive manner to this offer. So far requests for deployment of additional 121,126 seats during the three-month period have already been approved as against the 52,379 seats deployed during the last limited open-sky period.